UofTHacks 11

HACKING YOUR FIRST
HACKATHON

January 2024

With love and encouragement.
Shout out to SunHacks
for the reference ❤

Navigating this Slide Deck

Click on title to go to section:

Intro to Hackathons

Scoping a Project

Project Progress

Demoing your Project

What is a Hackathon?

$18k+ in Prizes

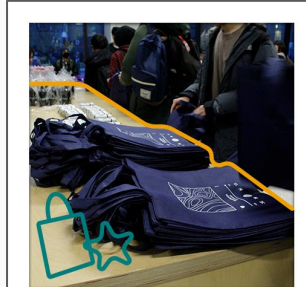## A hackathon is **many things**!

- Focused project sessions
- Community gatherings
- Educational opportunities
- Intense coding marathons
- Social meetups
- Define your unique experience!

Free Merch!

Some Hackathon Exclusive Things

Some hackathon things last year! Sponsors, workshops, free merch, and more! Lots to look forward to at the event:)

Best Things to Do in a Hackathon

Networking Opportunities

- **Mentors:** Connect with experienced mentors who can provide guidance and valuable insights into your field of interest.
- **Tech Talks:** Attend informative sessions led by industry experts, fostering networking and knowledge exchange.
- **MLH Exclusive Events:** Participate in events organized by Major League Hacking (MLH), providing exclusive networking chances within the tech community.

Building a Project

- **Workshops:** Enhance your skills through hands-on workshops covering various topics and technologies.
- **Activities:** Engage in interactive activities that promote team building and skill development.
- **Tech Talks:** Attend talks and discussions to stay updated on the latest trends and advancements in the tech industry.

Event Experience

- **Food:** Enjoy delicious meals and snacks, providing a relaxed environment for networking and socializing.
- **Swag and Stickers:** Collect event swag and stickers, creating a memorable experience and showcasing your involvement in the tech community.
- **Events:** We have activities like cup stacking and karaoke throughout the event. A great way to meet people and have fun

Hackathon Itinerary

Friday Night - Opening Ceremony with Theme and Sponsor-Theme Prize Announcements

Saturday Full Day - Start Building Project, Attend Workshops to get ideas, Network with Sponsors

Sunday Morning - Devpost Submission due. No more working on project after.

Sunday Morning - Demo/Pitch your Project to judges

All in 36 Hours!

Hackathons are for everyone!

86% of hackers have no idea what they'll do by the week of the hackathon. 59% still have no idea by the day of the hackathon
-      *stats by MLH's Co-founder Mike Swift*

In the realm of hackathons, uncertainty fuels innovation. Embrace the spontaneity, trust the process, and let your creativity soar!

Working with a Team

Take into account your team members' abilities and aspirations.

1. Each participant arrives at a hackathon with **unique skills** that drive their project endeavors.

2. Remember, failures are valuable lessons—they represent an initial stride toward eventual success. Embrace the learning process, and recognize that failure is an integral part of the journey. You do not need a functional perfect website - you need something you can demo and explain the functionality.

First-Time Hacker Tips

We recommend if you're a first-time hacker:

1. **Work with a team (up to 4).** We have team formation in Discord to facilitate it. It is more enjoyable to experience the challenge of building a project with others
2. If you are not familiar with coding, consider a low-code solution (basic HTML/CSS/JS/React) or no-code, such as Figma. It is not mandatory to use more complex ML/AI/APIs.
3. Build with team and sub-divide work:)

Want to see past projects? uofthacks-x.devpost.com/

Some Tools for Hackers

Managing the scope of your hackathon project is crucial for success within the intense 36-hour timeframe. Here are some popular tools!

Figma, No-Code Prototyping

- **Purpose:** Ideal for building projects without extensive coding knowledge, Figma is a powerful design and prototyping tool.
- **Benefits:** Enables rapid prototyping, collaboration, and visualization of project ideas without delving into complex coding structures.

Video tutorials (Youtube is great) exists for all of the following.

React, Web Development Framework

- **Purpose:** For website development, React is a popular JavaScript library that facilitates the creation of dynamic user interfaces.
- **Benefits:** Offers a modular and efficient approach to building web applications, making it accessible for first-time hackers to develop responsive and interactive websites.

Github, Version Control and Collaboration

- **Purpose:** GitHub is a version control platform that allows multiple contributors to work on a project simultaneously.
- **Benefits:** Essential for tracking changes, collaborating with team members, and maintaining a well-documented project history. GitHub enhances project organization and facilitates seamless collaboration during a hackathon.

Using Sponsor Tech + Events
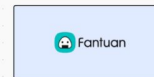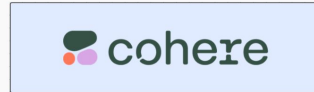
Developing Project around Sponsor prizes/theme can help narrow an idea

Figure out Tech Stack

Start figuring out the tech stack and inspiration that will help you accomplish your idea!

- Mentors can be a great resource to ask for advice!
- Still lost? Check out a workshop (many happen Friday night/Saturday full-day)!
- Ask other hackers what they think! (But be careful about your wording, we don't think anyone will steal your idea, but on the very off chance...)
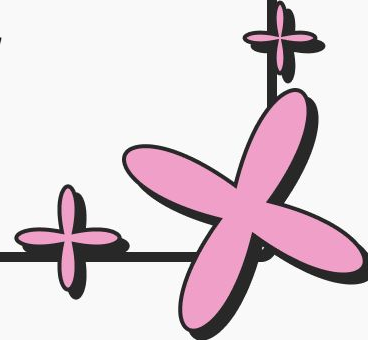
Taking Self Care

Take a moment to assess your well-being: Hydrate yourself with water, ensure you get adequate rest, take short breaks, nourish your body with food, and engage in conversation with someone. Remember, your well-being is crucial not just for yourself but also for the effectiveness of your team!

What will go wrong?

CODE BREAKS!

Mentors are here to help! Ask in Discord for help and we can help debug. Going on Google and searching for similar issues might work too! Test your website earlier than later!
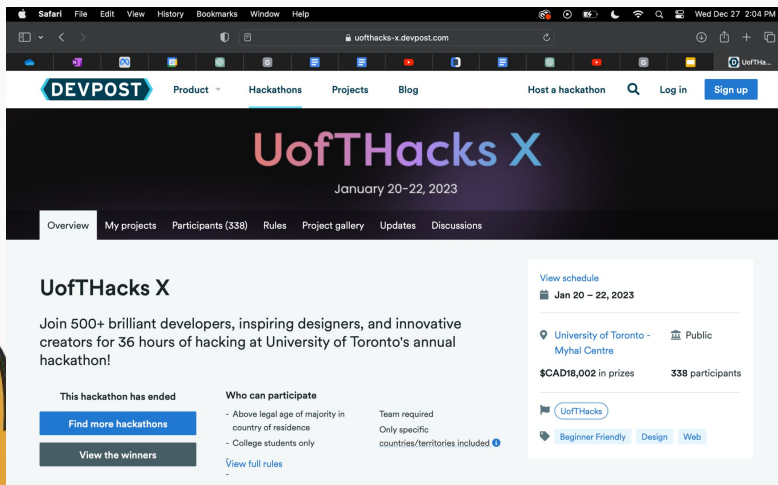

If Anything Can Go Wrong

IT WILL

Murphy's law

Devpost: Portal for Projects

DEVPOST IS A MANDATORY REQUIREMENT FOR SUBMISSION

📍 : Place to put project details
⏰: Closes in the morning (8 am). Late submissions are not accepted. Pro tip: submit early and you can edit all the way till 8 am

Sunday Morning: What is a Demo?

You've reached the end of the hackathon, you've got a semi-functional project. Now what?

- Pitch it! You've worked so hard you can't not tell everyone about your great idea and how it's doing so far!
- Get that badge of honor, the unique to the year and event demo badge
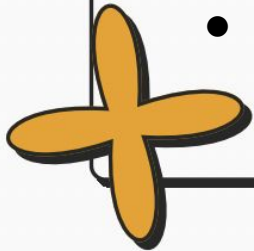
2-3 Minute Project Pitch

You have < 2-3 minutes to pitch your project to people who stop by and are interested (or judging) your project:

- Tell them your project goal/problem it's solving
- What's the tech stack?
- Show them how it works
- Tell them some future improvements/features
- Can use a slide deck with it, but the project and its current state is the most important thing here
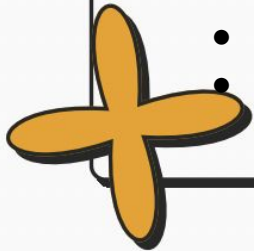
Post-Hackathon. What's next?

Here's what you've learned and can take with you to hackathons, school, industry, and more:

- **Public speaking**
- **Working with a deadline**
- **Learning new tech**
- **Working with a team**
- **Project management**
- **Your project's unique experience**
  - **Project can go on resume**
  - **Can continue project after the hackathon**
  - **Can use project when asked in interviews**

Need Help at the Event?

Come to the help desk (main floor in MyHal) or request a mentor at any point in the hackathons! The earlier you ask for help, the better we can help. We are here to help:)

💡 HELP

❓ faq

👔 ask-organizers

🙋 ask-mentor

🪪 request-mentor-supp...